AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A data transport system comprising:

a head end router coupled to a data source~~,~~; and

a plurality of downstream routers each for connection to at least one addressable site and each coupled to the head end router by a common high bandwidth forward data path;

each of the downstream routers being connectable by a switchable low bandwidth return path, the head end router selecting the return control path from only one of downstream routers at a time by causing set-up of the respective return path to the only one of the downstream routers; and

each downstream router receiving data from the common high bandwidth forward data path only when the return path is held connected by the head end router.

2. (currently amended) A data transport system as claimed in claim 1 in which ~~remote site~~ user addresses of remote sites are selected such that all of the remote sites being served are on a single subnet for the forward data path.

3. (currently amended) A data transport system as claimed in claim 1, in which user addresses of remote sites are selected such that all of the remote sites being served are on a single subnet for the switchable return data path.

4. (currently amended) A data transport system as claimed in claim 1, in which the common high bandwidth forward data path is an asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) permanent virtual circuit (PVC).

5. (original) A data transport system as claimed in claim 4, in which the PVC includes, at least in part, a link through a satellite broadcast channel.

6. (previously presented) A data transport system as claimed in claim 1, in which the switchable return path is a public switched telephone network (PSTN) path.

7. (currently amended) A data transport system as claimed in claim 1, in which the head end router packages multicast messages within an addressed data packet whereby multicast data is tunnelled from the head end to ~~the respective or each~~ one or more respective remote sites.

8. (currently amended) An ~~Apparatus~~ apparatus for a data transport system using an asymmetric data connection, the apparatus comprising:

a head end router coupable to an ATM PVC;

a PSTN modem coupled to the head end router;

a plurality of downstream routers each coupable to the ATM PVC via respective ATM interfaces; and

a plurality of downstream PSTN modems each coupled to a respective downstream router via a respective serial interface,

each ATM interface of each respective downstream router being allocated, in use, a respective IP address in a single subnet, and each serial interface of each respective downstream router being allocated, in use, a respective IP address in a single subnet, control of the receiving downstream router being activated by the head end router.

9. (canceled)

10. (currently amended) An ~~Apparatus~~ apparatus according to claim 8, in which the head end router includes a modem address mapping table operable to map the IP address of each of ~~the~~ said serial interfaces to the respective downstream PSTN modem to which each serial interface is connected.

11. (currently amended) ~~'~~An ~~Apparatus~~ apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the head end router is arranged to cause the ~~head end~~ PSTN modem coupled to the head end router to establish a connection with a predetermined one of the downstream PSTN modems using the modem address mapping table when a predetermined activation packet is received by the head end router for routing to the IP address of one of the serial interfaces.

12. (currently amended) An ~~Apparatus~~ apparatus according to claim 11, wherein at least the predetermined activation packet~~s are~~ is supplied to the head end router according to a predetermined timetable.

13. (currently amended) An ~~Apparatus~~ apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the head end router includes an ATM address mapping table operable to map the IP address of each of ~~the~~ said ATM interfaces to a predetermined ATM VCI and VPI.

14. (currently amended) A method of establishing an asymmetric data connection, the method comprising:

establishing a unidirectional ATM connection between a head end router and a plurality of downstream routers, all of the downstream routers being connected to the head end router via the same PVC,

receiving a predetermined activation packet at the head end router, and

reading the IP address of the activation packet and extracting connection information from a modem mapping table using the IP address to index the table and dialling from a PSTN modem connected to the head end router to a PSTN modem connected to one of the downstream routers using the connection information in order to establish a return data connection over the PSTN between the head router and the downstream router, the downstream router receiving data only when a return connection is established between the head end router and the downstream router.

15. (currently amended) A method according to claim 14, wherein ~~the~~ ATM interfaces of the downstream routers are allocated respective IP addresses in a common subnet.

16. (currently amended) A method according to claim 14, wherein ~~the~~ modem interfaces of the downstream routers are allocated respective IP addresses in a common subnet.

17. (previously presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein the activation packet is received according to a predetermined timetable.

18. (new) A data transport system as in claim 1, wherein each of the downstream routers includes a modem that receives incoming calls but does not dial out.

19. (new) An apparatus as in claim 8, wherein each of the plurality of the downstream PSTN modems receive an incoming call from the PSTN modem coupled to the head end router but does not dial out.

20. (new) A method as in claim 14, wherein each of the PSTN modems connected to one of the downstream routers receives an incoming call from the PSTN modem connected to the head end router but does not dial out.